

Ether the Book Lies or Mutt Has Lost His Punch

By "Bud" Fisher



Judgments

COMISKEY has been chosen as the man to make the declaration that the American league's duty to the National did mean something, that it was not a trick to enable Ban Johnson to escape criticism for his bold utterance about ticket scalping, which he failed to follow up. Comiskey is the best man to have been selected for such a speech, for he talks so seldom on base ball politics, as Sanborn says, that what he has to say carries weight. This much every informed, unbiased fan will admit: Base ball has been hurt by the character of certain small-bore plunders with gambling instincts who have got into base ball by way of the National league, and something needs to be done to repress their ignoble rage, as our old friend, Tom Gray, would say, and curb their avarice. Base ball has not been raised to the 9th power by that kind of influence and it cannot be maintained at the 9th power by it. We do not need any Ban Johnsons or Charley Comiskies to tell us that the base of syndicate ball is being thrown over the game by certain of these unscrupulous National league fellows and every friend of the game will hope that their influence and power can be successfully overhauled. But we cannot quite go with the Old Roman to the extent of saying that Ban Johnson should not be criticized. That in saying that "the king can make no mistakes" and that Ban is the king, Ban is a big fellow and has done a good deal for the American league and base ball in general, but not enough to entitle him to immunity from all criticism. We still think he made several blunders in the way he went about this ticket-scalping scandal. To man up a tree it looks as if he and other American leaguers, who had it on New York so long, became embarrassed when New York produced similar things on Philadelphia. Of course, this does not atone for what went on in New York and the shame is that the whole thing in both cities cannot be further aired.

Frank Gotch, who is not only the world's champion wrestler, but undoubtedly the greatest mat artist the world ever saw, announced after his frolic with the big Briton, Munncke, at Kansas City, his retirement. Of course, the public is tolerant of such announcements by sportsmen and actors, but Gotch might well retire, for he has made a fortune out of wrestling and lifted wrestling to its pinnacle of excellence. Undoubtedly he and his master, old Farmer Burns of Omaha, have done more to inspire other young men to great prowess on the mat than all others put together. The Burns-Gotch school of wrestling stands, as it were, for the triumph of mind over matter, though those who have been locked in the vice of their toeholds or hundred other fatal grips have doubtless been deeply impressed that matter cuts quite a figure in their work. But they have trimmed off the rough edges of the wrestling art, inspiring men of their own and other countries to rise higher in the game than they had ever risen. It is too bad that wrestling has not also been as completely purged of the element of hippodroming, but that is a harder task, and perhaps Gotch and Burns have done as much as they could to perform the task. Gotch, if he retires, does so admittedly the master of the mat, with no other man now before the public able even to cast the slightest shadow of doubt upon his title.

Thomson came out of last season the real stunner of the league, for while Horton of St. Joe led with an average of .34, he only played in 116 games, while Thomson played in 163 games and had a percentage of .32. But at that Jim Kane is the hitter of this league when it comes to scientific batting. James coughed an average of .349 for 171 games, but that only tells part of the story. Jim was even more timely with his hitting than Thomson, who was very timely. Kane was by all odds the most dangerous hitter in pinches and the most successful hunter. He quit the season of 1911, in fact, about the best or round player in the league, which is not to discount men like Thomson and Kniehoff and Cassidy and Gilmore and others. What is of particular interest in this connection is the fact that Kane has risen to his position under the heaviest kind of knocking. A player Omaha ever had was more thoroughly knocked, but the excellence came out of Jim simply because it was in him. He grows every day. He is one of those fellows whom knocking does not affect. He realizes that the average knocker knows nothing about real base ball, and that that is why he is a knocker instead of a booster. But just the same it is better not to knock.

This has been no week for ball playing at Bourke park, but a great one for the Stove league. How those old cubs have shot into that stove! Jack Pfeister never drove them hotter at old John Goding than Brother Dave and Dick Grotte have been shooting 'em into that old burner.

In the meantime, however, there is a semblance of peace between the National and American leagues, as also there is between Russia and the United States.

Jack Curley ought to propose Doc Hollen for a match with Jack Johnson. It would be taken as seriously as the Flynn proposition.

ATHLETICS ON A SOUND BASIS

High School Lads End Season with a Substantial Surplus.

ALL BRANCHES SHOW UP WELL

Foot Ball Comes First on Account of Lively Interest, but Wendell Phillips Game Was Needed to Pull Boys Through.

During the year ending today athletics have taken a very prominent part in the many student activities at the Omaha High school.

The report of Prof. C. E. Reed, athletic director, shows that the management is ending up the year with a total of \$12,000 in the treasury, enough to put the remaining branches of athletics during the new year on a sound basis. Had it not been for the large attendance at the Wendell Phillips game on Thanksgiving the school finances for the year would have ended with a large deficit.

Foot ball is classed first on account of the competition which it involves and because of its general popularity. Another point in its favor is that it generally maintains itself, something the other sports do not. The record of the eleven this year was a good one considering the difficulties under which the squad worked.

Basket Ball Shows Up Well.

Basket ball made a splendid record during the year, although it lacked sufficient student support. The games were all closely contested, and although the quintet did not make a perfectly clean record it made a most enviable one. The showing made by the lads in the state high school tournament, held at Lincoln in March, was a good one, the regular five playing into the semi-finals. Basket ball for this season has already started, and with about fifty lads competing for places on the regular five and the four class teams a showing even better than that of last season is expected. Jay Clark, former University of Chicago star, is coaching the squad. Edwin Carson, center, was captain of the 1911 quintet, and Beryl Crocker, right guard, is leading this season's five.

The girls are also playing the floor game under the direction of Miss Bess Dumont, the girls' physical training instructor at the school.

The high school has made its strongest and most respected record in track work, winning the big indoor meet, held in Omaha on April 1, at the Auditorium, against many of the best college and high school athletes in the middle west. The school also won the Nebraska State High school meet in a walkaway and took second place in the Missouri valley interscholastic meet, held at Lincoln in May. At the middle west invitation meet, held at Chicago under the auspices of Alonzo A. Stager in June, Robert Wood, captain of the Omaha High school track team, won the 228-yard dash in 0:37, and Virgil Rector took fourth place in the pole vault. Robert Wood has led the track team this year and succeeds himself for the 1912 squad, having been unanimously elected captain again.

Lively Interest in Tennis.

Tennis has received considerable attention, both from the boys and girls, this being the one form of athletics in which the girls have been especially active. Both boys and girls held two tournaments during the year, the boys holding a singles and a doubles tournament and the girls two singles tournaments. The year ends with Laura Zimmerman, '12, holding the undisputed singles championship among the girls after winning the spring tournament and successfully defending her title (this fall, Elvora Sismann, '12, holds the boys' singles honors, and James Garner, '13, and Joseph Creedon, '13, the doubles championship).

Golf sprung into prominence early in the spring, but interest in this sport gradually declined and no tournament was held in the fall. After considerable competition, Harold Johnston won the spring tournament and is now the golf champion of the school.

Strenuous efforts have been made to awaken more interest in cross-country running and a squad of some twelve lads has been practicing faithfully in this branch of athletics since November.

Many of the lads have also taken part in swimming, base ball and hockey, but not as school organizations or teams. Hockey was discontinued at the school four years ago because of the lack of financial support.

Where Death Gathers Toll in Sport Events

The annual sport report for 1911 shows that twenty-nine persons met their death from base ball this year, against twenty-two killed of foot ball. Automobile fatalities were twenty-nine. The report shows 200 sporting fatalities this year, 145 in 1910 and 119 in 1909. Following is the list:

	1909.	1910.	1911.
Base ball	22	23	29
Automobiles	18	31	29
Foot ball	22	20	22
Hockey	2	2	2
Boxing	2	2	2
Wrestling	2	2	2
Cycling	10	4	6
Rowing	2	2	2
Field games	2	2	2
Golf	2	2	2
Base ball	2	2	2
Boxing	2	2	2
Marathon	2	2	2
Other sports	4	4	3
Totals	119	145	200

Local Gridiron Heroes with Splendid Record Back of Them



Top Row, Left to Right—Gorham, right half; C. Greene, center; Ekman, right guard; Dineen, fullback; Master, left guard; Isaacson, left end. Bottom Row, Left to right—Davis, left tackle; P. Greene, quarterback, (captain); Creighton, right end; Hazen, right tackle, quarterback.

SMITHSON IS COMING BACK

Champion Hurdler Already Training for the Stockholm Events.

YANKEES HAVE BEEN IN DOUBT

Canadians Have Plan to Form All-British Team to Represent Parent Country as Well as Possessions.

NEW YORK, Dec. 30.—For some time past a doubt existed in the minds of the American Olympic committee whether the Yankee team at Stockholm would be as strong over the timbers as it was in the 1906 festival at London, especially as it was the belief that none of the men who upheld the Stars and Stripes then would be available again. Garrels and Rand have gone out of the game for good. Shaw has lost form and Smithson has not been carrying silk for nearly two years. There was a hope that Smithson would come back, for in any kind of fair fettle he would be a pillar of strength in the high stick event. For nearly a year nothing has been heard of the hurdler, and frequent inquiries were made about him, but only when he was quoted as throwing doubt on the 100 yard record of Dan Kelly was it known that he was in the land of the living at all.

Smithson was located a short time ago, and still more satisfactory to the athletic followers is the news that he has started to prepare himself for the trip to Sweden. He is now in business at Los Angeles, Cal., and the method he has adopted for getting into trim is to take long walks every evening before going to bed. He is of the opinion that there is no more beneficial exercise than the hurdlers stroll after the sun goes down, when the roads and streets are partially clear of vehicles and pedestrians and when a man has freedom enough to swing along at a nice gait. The practice beats every other known method for building up a substratum of muscular energy, which is absolutely necessary afterward in the exacting spell of strict training. Once or twice a week Smithson takes a turn over the hurdles, just to keep a proper measurement of his strides, so that by spring-time, when he begins work in real earnest, he will only have to race over the sticks daily.

A Great Performance.

Smithson won the high hurdles at London in the world record time of 0:15, and by the old world experts it was regarded as the greatest performance of the whole Olympic games. The distance was 130.2 yards, and to have covered this over the obstacles, 3 feet 6 inches high, in the time stated was a feat never before approached, nor is it likely to be unless Smithson duplicates it himself. Four Americans figured in the final of the race at London—Garrels of Michigan, who had equaled the previous world's mark of 0:15; Shaw of the Chicago Athletic association, supposed to be a shade slower than the Wolverine; Rand of Harvard, able to do a fraction worse than a perfectly fair start, but Smithson was leading at the first flight and from thence onward he improved his position at every obstacle. He took the hurdles as clean as a whistle and won by fully five yards from Garrels, with Shaw half a yard behind, in third place. Smithson was then 22 years of age, so that he will not be too old to duplicate the feat next year.

A visitor from Canada, during the last week told the story of how the Canadians have planned an all-British team, that is, if the Englishmen at home are willing. The proposal is to be made by the Canadians that Australia and Canada go in with England on the Olympic team, a proceeding which would be permissible,

CAVALRYMEN TO PLAY POLO

Major General Wood Thinks Game Will Help Poise in Saddle.

MANY TO ENTER TOURNAMENTS

Other Countries Have Army Teams to Make Men Better Horsemen and Uncle Sam Follows Example.

NEW YORK, Dec. 30.—Uncle Sam's cavalry officers are going to play polo so that "their poise in the saddle" will be on an equality with John Bull's mounted men. The notice of this change of affairs comes from Major General Leonard Wood, chief of staff of the United States army. General Wood, in a letter to Major Ross of the Coronado Beach club, California, says that he has ordered four polo teams from the same number of forts to report at San Diego and enter the tournaments to begin there the middle of January. From San Diego the teams will enter the events at Riverside, Pasadena and Burlingame.

Outside of the international matches there is nothing that will give polo a greater impetus in this country than the fact that at last the army is taking up the game seriously, and that it has the

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High School Lad an Athlete

Harry Munncke, one of the Omaha high school's prominent athletes, has a most versatile record and has taken an active part in all branches of athletics at the school, except tennis and golf.

He showed up strong at left half on the eleven this fall, playing in all except two games. Last year he played a hard and consistent game at fullback on the second team and was able to step into a regular position on the first eleven this season. Munncke did not put up a brilliant start of play, but showed his ability to play a hard and steady game at all times. Next to Virgil Rector, the star fullback, he was a mainstay at the kicking department of the game and his right toe was always relied upon to place the ball between the goal posts after a touch-down had been made. He showed up strong, especially in the game against Beatrice High, on November 4, when, after Rector had been injured, he slaved off an overwhelming defeat by his long boots.

Munncke is also a firm basket ball enthusiast and is expected to hold down either a guard or a forward position on the regular school quintet this season. He played as substitute guard on the team last year. As a means of getting in trim for the opening of this season, Munncke entered the Omaha high school with the Tiger Cubs quintet of the Young Men's Christian association for the last four weeks and is now in excellent playing condition to work out with the regular squad.

In addition to his foot ball and basket ball record, Munncke is also a track enthusiast, specializing in the pole vault. He will also try out in the High Jump this spring. In the preliminary meets, Munncke entered the Omaha high school two years ago, coming from the Pawnee City high school, where he made a star record. While there he held down second base on the school nine for two seasons and also took an active part in other branches of athletics at that school.

He intends to graduate from the high school next June, and after that will continue his studies, entering Nebraska university next fall, where much is expected of him by his local friends and admirers.



HARRY MUNNCKE RIGHT END

BASKET BALL AT CREIGHTON

University Athletes Enter Upon a New Line of Active Sports.

MATERIAL FOR TEAM SELECTED

Squad of Camera Has Been Picked and the Schedule for the Games This Season is Being Arranged.

With the return of the players to school after the Christmas vacation basket ball will be taken up as the major sport at Creighton university and strenuous practice begins.

This is Creighton's first year in basket ball, but from present indications the team to represent the college will be a fast one. While the squad is not a large one, each man on it has had experience in the game, and it will be rather a matter of choosing the best men for the five than of developing players.

In two practice games played before the holidays the squad showed up well in individual play, though a lack of teamwork was evident. This defect will be remedied as soon as regular work begins.

On the roster of candidates Hoffman and Prucha loom up as the stars of the squad, and these two players will probably constitute the mainstay of the team. Hoffman has had considerable experience in the game on college and high school teams. At Drake he starred two years as a center, which position he will also fill for Creighton, and he has yet to find a man whom he could not out jump.

As to the Men.

Prucha is a born athlete and will have no difficulty in making forward. He played four years of foot ball and basket ball at Wilber High school and during last season was the stellar halfback on the Creighton varsity.

Hoffman is the other forward. He and Prucha were runningmates at Wilber, taking part in all forms of athletics. "Baldy's" main asset is his fine goal throwing.

Shimerda, also of Wilber High, is a fast little player, who is strong at guard. He covers the field well and is speedy in sending the ball back to his forwards.

"Red" Madson, right end on the foot ball team, is another husky lad out of the guard.

"Shorty" McGrann, another foot ball man, is showing up well at center and guard.

Torrey and Feister from the arts department give promise of developing into speedy players.

Chas. Deifs of the Creighton Medical college is coaching the squad and has planned a stiff course of work for his men. Beginning this week, three afternoons will be spent at the Young Men's Christian association in practice, while twice the squad will work on Omaha university's floor.

Deifs is proving popular with the players and has secured their good will at the start, which will aid him materially in developing a team. He gained his knowledge of basket ball at Tiford college of Iowa and at Drake, where he played forward.

The schedule has not yet been completed, but so far includes some hard games. Bellevue and Omaha university will be met several times under the schedule of the Greater Omaha Basket Ball league. Dana college of Blair has written for a game and will be played early in January.

Haru Norka will be encountered February 2 at Peru and February 9 here. Denver university asked for a game here on some date in March, and if a return game is assured the proposition will probably be accepted. The Kansas Aggies have also agreed to a game, but no date has yet been fixed. Coach Deifs was recently in Des Moines arranging for games with Highland Park and Des Moines colleges. A trip is being planned which will embrace these schools and also Morningstar, Drake, Simpson and Grinnell.

A captain and manager will be elected this week.

Old Yale Men Are Offered Coach Jobs

NEW HAVEN, Conn., Dec. 30.—Captain Jesse Spaulding of the Yale 1912 eleven has offered coachships to several of the players of last season's team and has given them a couple of weeks to make up their minds. It is taken for granted that Captain Howe will be head coach, and it is expected that Jim Scully will be coach of the tackles and Francis coach of the guards.

Some winter work is to be ordered by Captain Spaulding. The quarterbacks will be called out in the gymnasium soon after college recess, about January 15, for some technical detailed instruction. All the quarterbacks of the eleven, the last season—Captain Howe, Merritt and Strout—will be graduated in June if it is aimed to develop at least two strong novices. Castles and Loftus from the present freshman class are the most promising. Kenneth McClintock, the freshman quarter of last season, probably will be a candidate next fall.

Spaulding is the first western captain the Yale eleven has had since the regime of Tom Shevlin. Captain Spaulding, asked whether he favored playing a western eleven next fall, said:

"I see no chance for a game. Our schedule is now heavy, and while there may be a couple of changes it is safe to predict that no western game will be attempted. The jump would be a long one for a Yale team to take and the faculty is unwilling to allow many cuts from recitations to athletics."

"A lot of these half-hearted, maybe greater-off who are waiting for New Years to quit will have full-throated fees by then."

No regular feller is deterred from doing a praiseworthy thing by fear of getting the laugh.

Talking about starting over, we seem to remember that Napoleon, no less, did that pretty successfully at least once.—New York World.